



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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SUPERINTENDENT LUNA HONORS IDAHO TEACHERS WITH GIANTS AWARD

BOISE – Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna joined Lieutenant Governor Brad Little this week in recognizing the exceptional efforts of three Idaho teachers who go above and beyond in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The teachers were honored with the 2013 Governor's Industry Award for Notable Teaching in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (GIANTS) Award during a presentation in the Governor's Ceremonial office.

“Through the GIANTS Award program, the State of Idaho works with industry partners to recognize teachers who create unique opportunities for students to not only experience the fun and excitement of science but also to learn how to apply lessons in real-world settings,” Superintendent Luna said.

Here are the teachers honored with the 2013 GIANTS Award. Each teacher received a \$2,000 award.

- Sandy Powell of Emmett High School,
- David Moon of North Idaho STEM Academy in Rathdrum,
- Luella Stelck, a gifted and talented teacher in Moscow School District.

Honorable Mention awards of \$500 each were presented to two additional teachers: Amber McVey of Pepper Ridge Elementary in Meridian received the Elementary Honorable Mention, and Carole Cox of Parma High School in Fruitland received the Secondary Honorable Mention.

The GIANTS program was initiated by the Office of the Governor and is sponsored by the Science and Technology Roundtable, a group of industry leaders including the Micron Foundation, Idaho National Laboratory, URS, Hewlett-Packard, LCF Enterprises, and Idaho Power Company. With support from the State Department of Education and Office of the State Board of Education, as well as the Discovery Center of Idaho, GIANTS recognizes teachers for their efforts to link industry and the economic future of Idaho to the classroom through the enhancement of science and technology education.

All the participating teachers were nominated by the student council and/or parent groups at their school for making science exciting, challenging, and relevant.

A cash prize of \$500 goes to each school/student council that nominated the GIANTS award recipients, with a cash prize of \$100 going to each school/student council that nominated the Honorable Mention award recipients.

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Here is a brief description of each 2013 GIANTS Award recipient:

Elementary School GIANTS Awardee: Luella Stelck

Luella Stelck teaches Gifted and Talented classes in Moscow at both West Park and Lena Whitmore Elementary. Lulu, as she is known to close friends and co-workers, was nominated for her innovative integration and application of science and technology in the classroom, for her professional collaboration with others to “bring science and math to life” in the minds of her students, and for her desire to help other teachers understand and apply the inquiry methods of science instruction.

Students consistently love her class because of activities such as neuroscience, aeronautics, activity-based chemistry, robotics and other theme-based units. These inquiry based units motivate students to use higher cognitive abilities as they make connections with the language of science. She utilizes a wide variety of science and research professionals, and also coordinates the chemistry and chess clubs, the We Do Lego programs, and Math and Field days for the schools she serves.

Middle School GIANTS Awardee: David Moon

David Moon of North Idaho STEM Charter Academy in Rathdrum is known for keeping the students discovering, experimenting, and continually achieving. Through rocketry he teaches the relevance of math – more specifically trigonometry. He also utilizes T-bots, Minds-I and First Lego League to help his students learn to build, program, test and revise their product.

His guest speakers include those from IBM, Discover Technology, Rathdrum Animal clinic, Architects West, Time Warner Cable, LCF Enterprises, the Lake Pend Orielle (Pond – duh – ray) Acoustic Research Detachment, and NASA just to name a few. It is David’s constant connection of real world application to his daily classrooms programs that keeps his kids engaged and their education relevant.

High School GIANTS Awardee: Sandy Powell

Sandy Powell of Emmett High School teaches chemistry, physics and physical science. She also assists with the Idaho Science and Aerospace Scholars program.

She consistently looks for opportunities to strengthen her knowledge and teaching skills by participating in industry, academic and professional training seminars that include aerospace, mining, and chemistry topics.

Through Sandy’s programs her high school students are given the opportunity to be involved in elementary science teaching and science fairs. She helps them see what it would be like to be a science teacher someday. Many experiments in class are also examples of what students could be doing in their jobs in the media, technology, or engineering fields. Through guest speakers, field trips to places like Micron, and extracurricular STEM activities such as Idaho Science and Aerospace Scholars program and engineering camps, Sandy has increased the interest in STEM careers, especially for females. Though most Emmett students complete their science requirements their junior year, her physics class continues to be full of seniors excited to learn more science from her. Helping the students see its relevance is making a big impact on the futures of the students in this small town.

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